

# NEW LIGHT ON MARHAŠI AND ITS CONTACTS WITH MAKKAN AND BABYLONIA\*

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## 1. Marhaši

In an article published back in 1982,<sup>1</sup> I offered a comprehensive reconstruction of the political geography of Iran during the second half of the third millennium BC. One of the political and cultural entities I discussed there was Marhaši or Parahšum, the two names representing the Sumerian and Akkadian designations of that place respectively. Cuneiform sources contain a wealth of information on Marhaši. In particular, they demonstrate that Marhaši remained in direct contact with Babylonia from the reign of Sargon of Akkade well into Old Babylonian times, a period of at least 500 years. As for Marhaši's geographical location, the surviving documentation makes it certain that Marhaši was situated to the east of Anšan (modern Tell Malyan). Hence my conclusion, as presented in the article just mentioned, that Marhaši is to be sought somewhere in Kerman. Unfortunately, at the time when my study was in the works it was difficult to think of any third millennium archaeological complex in Kerman that would be a suitable candidate for Marhaši. Besides Shahdad (of which exceedingly little was known at that time), the only other third millennium sites known in that region were Tepe Yahya and Tal-i Iblis. But the former

site is quite small, while the latter is almost completely obliterated.

This whole situation has been changed dramatically by the recent discoveries in the Jiroft region.<sup>2</sup> First of all, these discoveries now permit us to identify the plain of Jiroft as the center of the manufacture of carved chlorite vessels. Second, and more important, they reveal the presence in this region of nearly 300 tells, some of which reach as much as 100 hectares in size and feature monumental architecture. As estimated by Jean Perrot, "this area covers 400 square kilometers and had some cultural [and] political unity."<sup>3</sup> Or, to cite Maurizio Tosi (personal communication), "the evidence recently disclosed by the Iranians brings to light the importance of the Halil-rud alluvium as the center of a large political configuration, fully consolidated in the first half of the third millennium BC." At this point, therefore, we can be absolutely positive that the identity of that "political configuration" was Marhaši.<sup>4</sup> While the

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<sup>1</sup> "The Question of Marhaši: A Contribution to the Historical Geography of Iran in the Third Millennium B.C.," *ZA* 72 (1982) 237-65.

<sup>2</sup> See Y. Madjidzadeh, *Jiroft: The Earliest Oriental Civilization* (Teheran, 2003); A. Lawler, "Jiroft Discovery Stuns Archaeologists," *Science* 302 (2003) 973-74; *id.*, "Rocking the Cradle," *Smithsonian* 35/2 (May 2004) 40-48; NN, "Au berceau de la civilisation orientale: Le mystérieux 'pays d'Aratta'?" *Archéologia* 399 (April, 2003) 36-45; R. Covington, "What was Jiroft?" *Saudi Aramco World* Sept/Oct 2004, 2-11.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by Lawler, *Science* 302, 974.

<sup>4</sup> Madjidzadeh, *Jiroft*, 12, has recently attempted to connect the Jiroft cultural complex with the mythical land of Aratta (cf. also Covington, *Saudi Aramco World* Sept/Oct 2004, 3; and NN, *Archéologia* 399, 37), but such a possibility appears completely unlikely. Although the existence of a place called Aratta somewhere in the east (the region of Badakhshan? /

influence of Marhaši very likely extended to the north as far as the region of Shahdad, there is every reason to think that its center or focal point was the agriculturally rich valley of the Halil river. Significantly, the distance — as the crow flies — between the Halil valley and the coast of Oman is less than 250 km. This fact makes it highly likely that Marhaši and Makkan were close economic and cultural — and perhaps even political — partners. In particular, it would appear that Makkan served as the commercial center through which chlorite vessels and other “eastern” minerals, such as lapis lazuli and carnelian, were transshipped to Babylonia. Needless to say, this commerce involved the participation of other ports along the Gulf; one thinks here primarily of Tarut and Tilmun.

That Marhaši and Makkan were engaged in economic and cultural exchanges is confirmed emphatically by a recent article by Daniel T. Potts, who demonstrates that the ceramics of the Jiroft plain have much in common with the mid- and late third material

from the coastal areas of western Oman.<sup>5</sup> In his view, this evidence suggests that “an actual influx of potters from the former region was responsible for the inception of the ceramic in the latter area.”<sup>6</sup> Indeed, Potts goes so far as to conclude that “the likelihood of Marhashi being the source of Magan’s (at least western Magan’s) ceramic industry [becomes] virtually unavoidable.”<sup>7</sup>

Looking anew at the map of the Iranian plateau during the third millennium BC which accompanied my 1982 study,<sup>8</sup> I am gratified to see that my reconstruction requires only one revision — one may now remove the question mark after Marhaši’s name.

The intervening years have also seen the appearance of new textual data that lend further support to the identification of Marhaši with the region of Kerman. Two of these are of special interest, and so it will be useful to discuss them here.

## 2. The Question of the Duhšia Stone

Among the evidence bearing on the location of Marhaši, of particular importance are the types of stones associated with that country.<sup>9</sup> Those include the varieties of carnelian<sup>10</sup> and lapis lazuli,<sup>11</sup> as well as the stone called *marḥušu* or *marḥašu*,<sup>12</sup> whose name undoubtedly derives from that of the land in question. The former two gems point to Marhaši’s being situated in eastern Iran,

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Hindukush?) cannot theoretically be excluded, it is clear that, from the Babylonian perspective, Aratta was a purely fantastic concept, a kind of “never-never land,” or, if there was some physical reality behind its name, the ancient equivalent of Timbuktu. As it figures in literary compositions, Aratta is the convenient — but entirely artificial — paradigm of a fabulous eastern city, overflowing with precious gems and other exotic riches. It will suffice to say here that Aratta’s name appears exclusively in mythological sources, not even once being mentioned in economic and historical texts. This demonstrates that no direct — or even indirect — contacts or exchanges existed between Mesopotamia and Aratta at any point of ancient history. N.B.: Although it has been claimed that Aratta appears in the archaic tablets from Uruk (W. G. Green and H. J. Nissen, *Zeichenliste der archaischen Texte aus Uruk* [Berlin, 1987], 176 no. 35), this is almost certainly wrong (or inconclusive at best), since the sign in question (= ZATU-35) cannot confidently be connected with the later writing of Aratta’s name. See Steinkeller, *BiOr* 52 (1995) 698. For equally negative assessments of the question of Aratta’s historicity, see P. Michalowski, “Mental Maps and Ideology: Reflections on Subartu,” *The Origins of Cities in Dry-Farming Syria*, ed. by H. Weiss (Guilford, CT, 1986), 133 and nn. 3-4; and, more recently, D. T. Potts, “Exit Aratta: Southeastern Iran and the Land of Marhashi,” *Name-ye Iran-e Bastan* 4/1 (2004) 1-11.

<sup>5</sup> “In the Beginning: Marhashi and the Origins of Magan’s Ceramic Industry in the Third Millennium BC,” *Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy* 16 (2005) 67-78.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

<sup>8</sup> ZA 72, 265 fig. 2.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 249-52.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 250 and n. 46.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 250 and n. 47.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 251 and nn. 48-50. The earliest attested spelling (Ur III) is *mar-hu-ša*. For the examples, see CAD M/1, 281. Old Babylonian and later sources write it either *marḥušu* or *marḥašu*, as, for example, at Mari (see J.-M. Durand, ARM 21, 32-33). Note also the textual variants *na<sub>4</sub>-bur mar-hu-ša* and *na<sub>4</sub> mar-ha-ši* in the Nippur Forerunner, line 119, to Hh XVI 282 (= MSL 10, 58).

since the only known ancient sources of carnelian and lapis lazuli were in India and Afghanistan respectively. Very likely, therefore, Marhaši served as a transshipment point, to which those varieties of carnelian and lapis were brought from farther east, to be then transported to Mesopotamia and places farther west, such as Syria and Egypt. As for the *marhušu*, its mineralogical identification is unknown, though, in my 1982 article, I speculated that it may be chlorite or steatite.

Even more important in this connection is the stone *duhšia*,<sup>13</sup> which, to the eyes of Babylonians, was the Marhašean mineral *par excellence*. This is demonstrated by the fact that this stone is commonly described by the adjective “Marhašean.”<sup>14</sup> Since this is the only geographic designation that is documented for *duhšia*,<sup>15</sup> it appears that the ancient Babylonians believed Marhaši to be — if not the exclusive source of this stone — at least the place where the genuine or most valued *duhšia* was to be found.

That the *duhšia* was obtained from Marhaši is confirmed by one of the royal inscriptions of the Sargonic king Rimuš that

describes his campaign against Marhaši.<sup>16</sup> In the final section of that source, which names the booty brought from the campaign in question, one finds the following explicit statement: “(this is) the diorite, the *duhšia*, and other (types of) stones which I took as the booty of Marhaši” (ESI DUH.ŠI ù NA<sub>4</sub>.NA<sub>4</sub> *ša al<sup>1</sup>-qé-ù* SAG NAM.RA.AK *Ba-ra-aḥ-sum<sup>ki</sup>*).

There is also indirect evidence that, in Ur III times, *duhšia* was available in Makkan (Oman). This is suggested by the data bearing on the activities of an Ur III seafaring merchant named Pu’udu, who appears to have run an equivalent of the modern foreign-trade ministry.<sup>17</sup> We know, on the one hand, that Pu’udu brought the *duhšia* stones to Babylonia;<sup>18</sup> since, on the other hand, the same individual is known to have organized shipments of grain from southern Babylonia to Makkan,<sup>19</sup> a possibility exists that he obtained his supplies of *duhšia* while visiting Makkan. If so, one would find here a nice confirmation of the hypothesis that, toward the end of the third millennium BC, the northern coast of Oman served as a transshipment point of the goods coming from southeastern Iran, more specifically, the Halil-rud = Marhaši region (see § 1).

Writing in 1982, I tentatively identified the *duhšia* as a type of agate or chalcedony.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *duhšia*, written *duh-ši-a*, is a Sumerian word (though its ultimate origin is very likely foreign). Old Babylonian and later texts know also the Sumerogram DUH.ŠU.A (see, e.g., SIG DUH.ŠU.A in ARM 23 535 iii 2, etc.). The corresponding Akkadian term is *tuhšû* or *duhšû* (in Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian sources appearing also as *dušû*), as shown by the Old Babylonian spellings SIG *tu-uh-ši-im* (ARM 23 580:12') and [*ha'-z*]*i<sup>2</sup>-in-nu ša du-uh-ši-im* (ARM 10 18:7), the Middle Babylonian spelling *tu-uh-šu* (Arnaud, *Emar* 6/4, 134 no. 556:18', 20'), and the Hurrianized form *tuhšuwe* in the Middle Babylonian sources from Nuzi (AHw., 1367). Cf. B. Landsberger, JCS 21 (1967) 171.

<sup>14</sup> ZA 72, 249 n. 41. To the evidence offered there, add the following example from an Old Babylonian Mari text: 16 NA<sub>4</sub>.ZA.GIN 1 NA<sub>4</sub>.DUH.ŠU.A *Pa-ra-aḥ-ši* (for a *šurinnu* emblem of Šamaš) (ARM 25 259:4).

<sup>15</sup> The only seeming exception here is the mention, in a Hittite source, of a “*duhšia* of the land of Elam” (NA<sub>4</sub>.DUH.ŠU.A KUR URU I-la-am-da-*'az* — KBo 4 1:37; cf. E. Laroche, RHA 79 [1966] 171). But this example does not speak against the *duhšia*-Marhaši connection. On the contrary, by showing that the Hittites associated *duhšia* with the Iranian Plateau, it only confirms that Marhaši was part of Greater Elam.

<sup>16</sup> D. Frayne, *Sargonic and Gutian Periods (2334-2113 BC)*, The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Early Periods 2 (Toronto, 1990), 57-58 no. 8. [Henceforth abbreviated as RIME 2.]

<sup>17</sup> For Pu’udu, see Steinkeller, ZA 72, 249 n. 40, and, more recently and in greater detail, his “Toward a Definition of Private Economic Activity in Third Millennium Babylonia,” *Commerce and Monetary Systems in the Ancient World: Means of Transmission and Cultural Interaction*, Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Symposium of the Assyrian and Babylonian Heritage Project, ed. by R. Rollinger and Ch. Ulf, *Oriens and Occidens* 6 (Stuttgart, 2004), 104-05.

<sup>18</sup> 600.0.0 *še gur gún Má-gan-še ki énsi Gír-su<sup>ki</sup>-ta Pù-ù-du šu ba-ti kišib Ur-gi<sub>6</sub>-par<sub>4</sub> dumu Šu-na-ka i-dub A-šag<sub>4</sub>-NI-zi-na* (ITT 2 776:1-8; Šu-Sin 8/xi).

<sup>19</sup> 1 pair of fancy sandals presented to Pù-ù-du ud <sup>na<sub>4</sub></sup>*duh-ši-a mu-ni-ku<sub>4</sub>-ra-a*, “when he brought in the *duhšia* stones” (MVN 13 672:1-3; Šulgi 47/i).

<sup>20</sup> ZA 72, 250.

However, in view of the various data that have become available since the publication of my article, this hypothesis now demands revision. Especially important in this regard is the fact that the word *duššia* also designates a type of leather, without any question referring to its color.<sup>21</sup> As we learn from the Isin texts dating to ca. 1900 BC, this particular type of leather was manufactured through the use of copper.<sup>22</sup> Specifically, there are records of copper being issued to the leather-workers to produce the *duššia* leather.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> See M. Stol, RLA 6/7-8 (1983) 534.

<sup>22</sup> The hides treated in this manner invariably came from goats, with an average rate of ca. four shekels of copper per one hide. The *duššia* leather was clearly an expensive material, since it was reserved for the king and his entourage. The articles made of it were primarily sandals (BIN 9 107, 231, 397, 426, 460; 10 117 [e-sir lugal]) and boots (BIN 9 107, 397, 426, 428; 10 117 [kuš<sup>s</sup> súhub lugal]), though it was also used to decorate furniture (BIN 9 234 [banšur lugal], 354 [gu<sup>is</sup> gu-za lugal], 436 [gu<sup>is</sup> gu-za Má-gan mes ... lugal]), chariots (BIN 9 187 [gigir Ga-ú-šum], 193 [da<sup>is</sup> gigir gibil lugal-še], 198 [gigir<sup>d</sup> En-lil-lá-še], 454 [gigir lugal sumun-ka]), and harness (BIN 9 429 [kuš<sup>s</sup> igi-tab anše, tūg-TUM anše]). Another material colored with copper to achieve the same effect was a linen product called *gu-dim<sub>4</sub>-ba*, which apparently was applied as a finishing or decorative material (trim?) to footwear.

<sup>23</sup> See, especially, the following examples: 1 kuš duh-ši-a urudu-bi 4 1/3 gín ... 1 kuš duh-ši-a urudu-bi 4 gín ... 1 kuš duh-ši-a 1 gu-dim<sub>4</sub>-ba gada urudu-bi 6 'gín' (BIN 9 455:1-2, 4-5, 8-10); 2 ma-na urudu kuš duh-ši-a-še šag<sub>4</sub>-bi-ta 1 2/3 ma-na 5 gín kuš duh-ši-a-še ba-an-gar šag<sub>4</sub>-ba 15 kuš duh-ši-a ù gu-dim<sub>4</sub>-ba gada duh-ši-a e-sir lugal é-ba-an é-ba-an 3-a-kam ba-an-gar si-i-tum 15 gín, "120 shekels of copper (were expended) for the *duššia* leather; out of it, 105 shekels were used for the *duššia* leather; out of the latter, 15 *duššia* hides and *duššia* gu-dim<sub>4</sub>-ba-linens were used for three pairs of royal sandals; the remainder is 15 shekels (of copper)" (BIN 9 460:1-10); 1 kuš duh-ši-a máš-gal šag<sub>4</sub> urudu 2 ma-na-kam, "1 *duššia* hide (from) mature goat, out of the (hides treated with) 120 shekels of copper" (BIN 9 187:2); 1 ma-na urudu kuš duh-ši-a<sup>kuš<sup>s</sup></sup> súhub<sup>1</sup> e-sir lugal-še (BIN 9 107:1-3); 2 2/3 gín urud[u] gu-dim<sub>4</sub>-ba gada duh-ši-a-še (BIN 10 132:1-2); 1<sup>kuš<sup>s</sup></sup> súhub É.AN-ka é-ba-an gu-dim<sub>4</sub>-ba duh-ši-a-ta sa<sup>kuš<sup>s</sup></sup> súhub-ta 1/3 ma-na 5 gín (BIN 9 428:6-8).

For the use of copper to color leather in later sources, see Stol, RLA 6/7-8, 534. Similar application of copper may also be meant in the Mari texts dating to the so-called "*šakkanakku* period" (= early Old Babylonian), which record the expenditures of small amounts of copper for

It is certain that the purpose of copper in the manufacture of *duššia* leather was to produce verdigris, the basic acetate of copper (German *Grünspan*), a green or greenish-blue pigment prepared by treating copper with acetic acid.<sup>24</sup> Verdigris was used extensively in ancient and modern times, primarily to color leather, but also in medieval illuminations. A particularly detailed description of the manufacture of verdigris is offered by the monk Theophilus, active at ca. 1100 AD, in his "De Diversis Artibus." According to that source, the production of verdigris was achieved through the oxidation of thin copper plates by exposing them to vinegar or urine.<sup>25</sup>

footwear: 6 GÍN URUDU IŠ 3 *maš-a-ni šu* DAM.SAL DINGIR (ARM 19 291:1-3); 5 GÍN URUDU IŠ *maš-a-ni-en sa šAGINA* (ARM 19 287:1-3); 5 GÍN URUDU IŠ <*ma->sa-ni-en sa šAGINA* (ARM 19 300:1-3). However, the last examples remain somewhat ambiguous, since the copper could alternatively have been used for buckles or other type of footwear decoration.

<sup>24</sup> For this conclusion, see already Stol, RLA 6/7-8, 534.

<sup>25</sup> "Vom salzhaltigen Grün: Wenn du aber eine grüne Farbe machen willst, so nimm ein Stück Eichenholz, so lang und breit, wie dir beliebt, und höhle es in Form eines Kästchens aus. Darauf nimm Kupfer, mache es zu dünnen Streifen, so breit als du willst, nur daß ihre Länge die Breite des ausgehöhlten Holzes decke. Nach diesem nimm eine flache Schüssel mit Salz, drücke es stark zusammen und wirf es ins Feuer, bedecke nachts mit Kohlen und am nächsten Tag mahle es sorgfältig auf dem trockenen Steine. Hast du dir zarte Zweiglein verschafft, so stecke dieselben in die genannte Höhlung des Holzes, so daß zwei Teile der Öffnung darunter, einer darüber befindlich sei, bestreiche die Kupferstreifen beiderseits mit reinen Honig, streue das geriebene Salz darauf und lege sie zusammenhängend auf die Hölzchen, worauf du mit einem andern, hierzu geeigneten Holze zudeckst, damit keine Ausdünstungen verloren gehen könne. Lasse dann in der Ecke dieses Holzes ein Bohrloch machen, durch welches du erwärmten Essig oder warmen Harn eingießen kannst, so daß ein Drittel gefüllt werde, und sogleich verstopfe die Öffnung. Dieses Holz sollst du an einen Platz schaffen, wo du es von allen Seiten mit Mist bedecken kannst. Nach vier Wochen aber hebe den Deckel, schabe, was du auf dem Kupfer findest, ab, und bewahre es, und indem du es auf's Neue hinstellst, bedecke es in der Ordnung, wie oben beschrieben worden ist.

Vom Spanisch-Grün: Wenn du aber Spanisch-Grün bereiten willst, so nimm dünne Kupfertafeln, schabe sie fleißig auf jeder Seite, übergieße sie mit reinem und wärmem Essig,

These data establish quite conclusively that the duhšia stone was of green or bluish-green color.<sup>26</sup> In turn, this information makes it virtually certain that duhšia is the ancient term for “chlorite” (or “steatite,” see below). In fact, the word “chlorite” derives from Greek *chlōros*, meaning “pale green.” As it happens, many of the soft-stone pieces from Jiroft have a characteristic bluish hue.

Among the objects that were usually made of duhšia, one clearly stands out: it is the solar disk of the sun-god Šamaš, called aš-me in Sumerian, and *šamšatu*, *šamšu* in Akkadian. Since such disks are often described as *šurinnu*, “divine emblem,” and since their weight could exceed one mina (= ca. 0.5 kg),<sup>27</sup> these were fairly large objects.

ohne Honig und Salz, und bringe sie in einem kleinen, ausgehöhlten Holze an, in der oben angegebenen Weise. Nach Zwei Wochen siehe nach, schabe ab und fahre fort, bis du genug Farbe hast.” After V. Trost, *Skriptorium: Die Buchherstellung im Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 1991), 40-41.

See also M. Lombard, *Les textiles dans le monde musulman du VII<sup>e</sup> au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1978), 143 (quoted also by Stol, RLA 6/7-8, 534): “Il n’existait qu’une seule matière tinctoriale pour obtenir la teinte verte, un produit minéral, qui servait à la fois en tenture et en peinture: le verdet ou vert de gris, en arabe *zingar* (du persan: *zingar*). A la fois couleur et mordant, il était préparé par oxydation à l’air de lames de cuivre arrosées de vinaigre ou abandonnées dans du marc de raisin. On obtenait ainsi de l’acétate de cuivre basique, teinture verte, beaucoup plus rare et plus délicate que les autres colorants.”

<sup>26</sup> Further confirmation of this is provided by the following lexical entries, where *tuḥšū* is given as a synonym of both *uqnītu*, “bluish, lapis-lazuli like,” and *ḥašmānu*, “bluish-green”: (siki) za-gin-na = *uq(AZ)-ni-tum* = *tu-uḥ-šu*; (siki) sag-gil-mud’ = *ḥa-aš-ma-nu* = *tu-uḥ-šu* (Arnaud, *Emar* 6/4, 134 no. 556:18’, 20’; copy in Arnaud, *Emar* 6/2, 465 74190j). Cf. [siki za-gi]n = *uq-na-a-tum* (Hh. XIX line 79 = MSL 10, 129); na<sub>4</sub> sag-gil-mud = *ḥaš-ma-nu* = *sag-gil-li-mud* (Hg. B IV 113 = MSL 10, 33). For *ḥašmānu*, see CAD H, 142.

Here it should be noted that, while the term duhšia/*tuḥšū* designates a color of faience or glass — probably “bluish-green” — it certainly never functioned as a designation of faience itself, as mistakenly thought by S. Dalley, “Hebrew *taḥaš*, Akkadian *duḥšu*, Faience and Beadwork,” JSS 45 (2000) 1-19. Simply put, there is no shred of evidence to support such a theory.

<sup>27</sup> See ARM 25 259 cited below, and the mention of a sun disk of gold weighing one mina in CCT 42a:4 (Old Assyrian).

The materials used in their manufacture were duhšia, lapis lazuli, silver, and gold. As is suggested by the Old Babylonian year-formulae that describe the making of such objects,<sup>28</sup> the aš-me consisted of a large central roundlet, made of either duhšia or lapis lazuli,<sup>29</sup> which was overlaid with silver and gold — and occasionally with small pieces of lapis lazuli as well:

aš-me dil-dil-a<sup>na<sub>4</sub></sup>duh-ši-a-ke<sub>4</sub> šu-nir-ra ud-gim i-zalag-ge-eš-a<sup>na<sub>4</sub></sup>za-gìn-na kug-sig<sub>17</sub> huš-a kug luh-a-bi-da-ke<sub>4</sub> šu-a mah-bi íb-ta-an-du<sub>7</sub>-uš-a bí-in-dím-àm, “he fashioned various sun disks of duhšia, the emblems shining like the bright day, he adorned them splendidly with lapis lazuli, red gold, and purified silver” (Samsu-ditana 7).

aš-me gal-gal-la<sup>na<sub>4</sub></sup>duh-ši-a-ke<sub>4</sub> šu-nir-ra i-mah-eš-a, “(he brought into the Ebabbar) great sun disks of duhšia as majestic emblems” (Ammi-ditana 13).

aš-me<sup>na<sub>4</sub></sup>za-gìn-na šu-nir gal-gal-la, “(he brought into the Ebabbar) great sun disks of lapis lazuli, the very large emblems” (Abi-ešuh “T”).

The manufacture of a similar — if not identical — object is also described in an Old Babylonian text from Mari.<sup>30</sup> The materials used for it were 57 2/3 shekels of silver, 27 1/2 shekels of (ordinary) gold, 1 2/3 shekel of red gold, 16 pieces of lapis lazuli, and 1

<sup>28</sup> Cited after Ch. E. Woods, JCS 56 (2004) 52 n. 143.

<sup>29</sup> In fact, duhšia and lapis lazuli appear to have been the only stones that were employed to fashion such sun disks. Such at least is the testimony of lexical sources: na<sub>4</sub> aš-me duh-ši-a = *šá-an-šú*, na<sub>4</sub> šu-nir duh-ši-a = *šu-ri-in-nu* (Hh. XVI 39, 41 = MSL 10, 6); na<sub>4</sub> aš-me z[a-gin], na<sub>4</sub> šu-nir za-gin (Hh. XVI 104-105 = MSL 10, 7); na<sub>4</sub> aš-me duh-ši-a = <sup>d</sup>UTU-*ši*, na<sub>4</sub> šu-nir duh-ši-a = *šu-ri-nu* (Hh. XVI RS Recension 30-31 = MSL 10, 38); na<sub>4</sub> aš-me za-gin = <sup>d</sup>UTU-*ši*, na<sub>4</sub> šu-nir za-gin = *šu-ri-nu* (Hh. XVI RS Recension 76-77 = MSL 10, 40).

<sup>30</sup> 5/6 MA.NA 7 2/3 GÍN KUG.BABBAR 27 1/2 GÍN KUG.GI 1 2/3 GÍN KUG.GI *ru-šu-um* 16 NA<sub>4</sub>.ZA.GÍN 1 NA<sub>4</sub>.DUH.ŠÚ.A *Pa-ra-aḥ-ši šu-ri-in* <sup>d</sup>UTU, “the completed work on (lit.: of) the emblem of Šamaš” (ARM 25 259:1-7).

piece of Marhašean duhšia. As in the earlier examples, that single piece of duhšia apparently served as the *šurinnu*'s central roundlet.<sup>31</sup>

If I am right that the main element of the *aš-me* was a duhšia or lapis lazuli disk, one could then envision, based on the contemporaneous representations of solar disks in art,<sup>32</sup> that the silver and gold used in such manufacture formed the disk's frame or aureola,<sup>33</sup> which took the form of eight star points alternating with eight undulating

radial streams.<sup>34</sup> If so, the *aš-me* had the general appearance of a monstrance. Be that as it may, for our purposes sufficient is the fact that duhšia and lapis were alternative materials in the production of the sun-disks' central roundlets.<sup>35</sup> Accordingly, the two stones must have been of similar color — and of similar texture and appearance as well — which further confirms the identification of duhšia as chlorite.

Yet it is the evidence from two soft-stone bowls from Babylonia that really clinches the duhšia = “chlorite” identification.<sup>36</sup> Both bowls are inscribed with the same inscription of Rimuš, which identifies the very objects as having been brought to Babylonia as part of the booty of Marhaši. I hardly need to point out that this fact agrees perfectly with the earlier-cited inscription of Rimuš, according to which his Marhašean booty included duhšia stones (or, more likely, vessels and other objects made of duhšia). It is just not unreasonable to assume that the two bowls in question are the actual remnants of the spoil about which Rimuš boasts.<sup>37</sup>

However, if duhšia is chlorite, what is then the identity of *marḥušu* (also *marḥašu*),

<sup>31</sup> Similar objects seem to be meant also in the following Ur III examples: 1 <sup>na4</sup>duh-ši-a 9 a-bi-za <sup>na4</sup>duh-ši-a ud-sakar sa-am-sa-tum kug-sig<sub>17</sub> huš-a si-ge<sub>4</sub>-dè, “1 duhšia (piece) (and) 9 duhšia ... to be set in the frame (?) of the sun disk of red gold” (UET 3 557:3-6); 1 sa-am-sa-[tum kug]-sig<sub>17</sub> gin [<sup>na4</sup>d]uh-ši-a [s]i-ga, “1 sun disk of ordinary [go]ld inlaid with duhšia” (W. W. Hallo, *Studies Jones*, 3 NBC 11434 i'2').

<sup>32</sup> I refer here specifically to the sun disks depicted on the Victory Stele of Naram-Sin (for which see, most recently, the extensive discussion by I. Winter in *Assyria and Beyond: Studies Presented to Mogens Trolle Larsen*, ed. by J. G. Dercksen [Leiden, 2004], 617-25) and the virtually identical representations from a late third millennium stele from Susa (see *The Royal City of Susa: Ancient Near Eastern Treasures in the Louvre*, ed. by P. O. Harper et al. [New York, 1992], 169 [discussion], 170 [photograph]) and the Ur-Namma stele. The first millennium sun disks had a considerably different form: the central roundlet was much larger, with the star points and the radial streams (now numbering four each) terminating within the roundlet's circumference. See, e.g. the disk depicted on the so-called Sungod Tablet of Nabu-apla-iddina, for which see most recently Woods, JCS 56, 26, 50-53.

Commenting on the three sun disks depicted on the Victory Stele of Naram-Sin, Winter, *op. cit.*, 621, argues that “what we have on the stele is clearly not an emblem, or even a symbol, but rather the referenced *presence* of the sun, in a tradition where no distinction was made between *sun* per se and *sun-god*.” Here I disagree. The great formal consistency with which sun disks are represented in the art of the Sargonic through the Old Babylonian periods (cf. also the representation on the Anubanini relief) indicates to me that these are actual depictions of cultic emblems. This is in agreement with the fact that the surviving Mesopotamian representations of divine symbols and deities are, as a general rule, direct reproductions of real cultic objects, such as emblems, divine statues, and the various other cultic paraphernalia.

<sup>33</sup> As is suggested by UET 3 557 (cited above, n. 31), such a “frame” or “aureola” was referred to as ud-sakar (Akk. *uskāru*), usually meaning “crescent (moon), crescent-shaped object.”

<sup>34</sup> Six and six on the Ur-Namma stele.

<sup>35</sup> Since it could not have been their color, what qualified duhšia and lapis lazuli to be mimetic representations of the sun very likely was the fact that these two stones came from the faraway eastern mountains, i.e., the place where the Sungod rises. I owe this perceptive idea to Christopher E. Woods. For the Sungod's connection with the eastern mountains, see in detail Woods, “At the Edge of the World: Cosmological Conceptions of the Eastern Horizon in Mesopotamia” (to appear in JCS).

<sup>36</sup> See ZA 72, 254 and nn. 63-64. For these two objects and the accompanying inscription, see now also D. T. Potts, *Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy* 16, 68-69 and figs. 2-4, who reproduces their photographs and drawings. For a superior photograph of the British Museum bowl, see J. Curtis, *Ancient Persia* (Cambridge, MA, 1990), 10 fig. 6. According to Frayne, RIME 2, 66 no. 17 Catalogue, the British Museum bowl (Ex. 1) is made of “black steatite,” while the Berlin piece (Ex. 4) is of “dark green steatite.”

<sup>37</sup> Though not the *only* remnants. The same passage also mentions diorite (objects), and there survive at least two diorite bowls with an inscription identifying them as being part of Rimuš's Marhašean booty. See Frayne, RIME 2, 62 no. 12 (from Nippur), 66-67 no. 17 Ex. 2 (from Ur).

which, back in 1982, I considered to be a possible candidate for chlorite? Since *marḥušu*'s name is unquestionably connected with that of Marhaši, it too must have been a mineral characteristic of Marhaši. It is difficult, however, to think of any other stone — apart from chlorite — that would be uniquely typical of southeastern Iran. In view of this fact, the most plausible explanation appears to be that *marḥušu* too designates chlorite. If so, it would be possible to envision that *marḥušu* is an Akkadian name of chlorite, meaning “the one of Marhaši” (\**marḥašiju* > Sum. *marhušu* > Old Babylonian *marḥušu*), while *duhšia* (which is unlikely to be a Sumerian word) represents a foreign (Elamite?) — and apparently an earlier — designation of this mineral.

An alternative — and perhaps simpler — solution would be to assume that one of these two terms actually designates steatite, which is very similar to — and sometimes even indistinguishable from — chlorite. In fact, even the modern scholars differ as to whether the soft-stone of southeast Iran is chlorite or steatite = soapstone, with some among them even identifying it as serpentine.<sup>38</sup> While not demonstrable at this time, the resulting terminological distribution: *duhšia* = “chlorite” vis-à-vis *marḥušu* = steatite (or vice versa), would be as acceptable as the first explanation.

### 3. The Marhašean Harp or Lyre

The other new datum of possible significance for Marhaši's location is the existence of a type of harp or lyre (Sumerian *zà-mí* = Akkadian *sammû*), called *paraḥšītu* or *parašītu*, “the one of Marhaši,”<sup>39</sup> which, as its name indicates, must have been native to

Marhaši (at least originally). Save for one lexical attestation, all of the textual data bearing on this instrument date to the Old Babylonian period, with most of them coming from Mari sources:

[<sup>gis</sup>zà-m]í Mar-ha-šī<sup>ki</sup> = MIN (= *pa-ra-ši-tum*), following [<sup>gis</sup>MIN (= *zà-mí*) Š]a-aš-ru<sup>ki</sup> = *pa-ra-ši-tum* (Hh VII B 90-91, revised text, cited courtesy of M. Civil).

[1<sup>?</sup> <sup>gis</sup>zà]-mí Mar-ha-ši in W 20475\* (unpublished, cited courtesy of C. Wilcke). This text, stemming from Uruk and dating roughly to the reign of Kudur-mabuk of Larsa and Emutbal (ca. 1800 BC), mentions a daughter of Kudur-mabuk named Manzi-wartaš.<sup>40</sup> As suggested by the text's context, that *sammû* may have come with Manzi-wartaš and her retinue (who very likely included singers<sup>41</sup>) from Elam.

1 KUŠ *ši-nu-un-tim a-na* 1 GIŠ. BANŠUR ù 1 <sup>gis</sup>*pa-ra-[aḥ-ši]-tim*, “one *šinuntu* leather<sup>42</sup> for one table and one *p*.” (ARM 23 213:23-25); the same text lists also the instruments *telmuttu*, “the one of Tilmun,” and *kinnaru*, “lyre;” D. Charpin, ARM 21, 367-68, suggests that both *paraḥšītu* and *telmuttu* were varieties of *kinnaru*.

1 KUŠ *ši-nu-un-tim a-na* 1 GIŠ. BANŠUR ù 1 <sup>gis</sup>*pa-ra-aḥ-ši-tim* (ARM 21 298:10-11; lists also *kinnaru* and *telmuttu* instruments).

[x] <sup>gis</sup>*pa-ra-aḥ-še-tum e-nu-tum* (ARM 23 580:16').

1 *ki-ru ša pa-ra-aḥ-ši-tim* GIŠ.NU<sub>11</sub>. [GAL], “one ‘neck’<sup>43</sup> of *p*. made of

<sup>38</sup> See T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East: An Archaeological and Historical Study of Foreign Relations ca. 3400-2000 BC*, Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, Monograph 37 (Oxford, 1994), 250. While settling for the term “chlorite,” Potts makes the following caveat: “For convenience this term will be used here but it should be understood as elliptical for chlorite/steatite/serpentine” (*ibid.*).

<sup>39</sup> Cf. CAD P, 145a under *paraḥšītu*.

<sup>40</sup> For this text, see also Steinkeller in E. C. Stone and P. Zimansky, *The Anatomy of a Mesopotamian City: Survey and Soundings at Mashkan-shapir* (Winona Lake, 2004), 30-31 and n. 18.

<sup>41</sup> Here note that singers (NAR) appear in a number of Larsa texts associated with Kudur-mabuk. See *ibid.*, 31-32.

<sup>42</sup> For *šinuntu*, a type of leather or a leather object, see CAD Š/3, 55.

<sup>43</sup> J.-M. Durand, NABU 1989/30, translates *kirru* as “clavicle,” and thinks that “la *paraḥšītu*, au

alabaster” (ARM 25 200:2; collated by J.-M. Durand, NABU 1989/30).

[1 <sup>giš</sup>*pa-ra*]-*aḥ-ši-tum ki-ir-ra-ša* NA<sub>4</sub>. [GIŠ.NU<sub>11</sub>.GAL] (ARM 25 768:14'; collated by Durand, NABU 1989/30).

<sup>giš</sup>*pa-ra-aḥ-ši-tum i-na qa-tim ú-ul i-ba-aš-ši-ma* <sup>giš</sup>*pa-ra-aḥ-ši-tam eš-še-tam ú-še-pi-iš-ma aṭ-ru-us<sub>x</sub>(IS)-sí*, “(concerning the female musician my lord wrote to me) there was no *p.* available so I had a new *p.* made and I sent it (to her)” (ARM 27 7:10-12).

Here it may be relevant that the iconographic repertoire associated with the region of southeastern Iran contains depictions of a characteristic string instrument — a type of harp or lyre (N.B.: lyre belongs to the harp family) — which, to the best of my knowledge, is documented nowhere else. The main distinguishing features of this instrument are the large soundbox which the player squeezed under his left arm, the fact that it was held in horizontal position, and the use of plectrum. As concluded by musicologists, this is technically “arched horizontal harp.”<sup>44</sup>

moins à l’origine, aurait donc été composée de deux parties plates en os.” He bases this interpretation, in part, on the spelling *ki-ir-ra-ša* in ARM 25 768:14’ (see below), which appears to be a dual. However, since neither harp nor lute has any double part resembling a collarbone, a much simpler explanation, in my view, is that *kirru*, which denotes “the region extending from the throat to and including the clavicles” (see CAD K, 410b *kirru* B), describes in this instance the instrument’s “throat” or “neck.” In fact, “neck” is the standard English designation of the string instrument’s elongated narrow section extending beyond the soundbox. Moreover, as both attestations make it clear, the *kirru* was inlaid with alabaster, and not with bone. While this solution is definitely preferable, I admittedly cannot account for the form *ki-ir-ra-ša* — unless this particular *paraḥšītu* came with a replacement neck.

<sup>44</sup> See M. Duchesne-Guillemin, “La harpe à plectre iranienne, son origine et sa diffusion,” JNES 28 (1969) 109-115; *id.*, “Les instruments de musique dans l’antiquité,” *Iranica Antiqua* 31 (1996) 228-31; R. J. Dumbrill, *The Musicology and Organology of the Ancient Near East* (London, 1998), 224. Referring to the representations on the Adab vase (see below), W. Stauder, *Die Harfen und Leiern der Sumerer* (Frankfurt a.M., 1957), 16-19 and figs. 16 and

At least three representations of this instrument survive. The best and clearest of those comes from a soft-stone vessel from Adab (modern Bismaya),<sup>45</sup> which depicts a “marching band”: two individuals playing

17, offers the following description of this instrument, and suggests that it is very similar to the Indian harps of the second century BC: “Am unterem Ende des Saitenhalses dieser Harfen befindet sich ein größerer Resonanzteil. Die Instrumente werden aber im Gegensatz zu den sumerischen Harfen nicht vertikal, sondern horizontal gehalten, ihr Schallkasten wird unter den linken Arm geklemmt. Der Saitenhals verläuft von dem Resonanzteil ausgehend zunächst horizontal nach vorne, um dann in einer Rundung auszulaufen ... Die fünf bzw. sieben Saiten sind, wieder im Gegensatz zur sumerischen Harfe, dem Spieler zugekehrt. Charakteristisch sind ferner die über den Saitenhals herabhängenden Saitenenden und die Plekttrumspielweise. Die beiden Instrumente zeigen also Merkmale, die sie von den sumerischen grundsätzlich unterscheiden; es kann sich daher keinesfalls um sumerische Harfen handeln ... Interessant ist in diesem Zusammenhang, daß altindische Harfen überliefert sind ..., die in Form und Spielweise sehr an die Bismaya-Harfen erinnern. Wenn diese Instrumente auch erst aus wesentlich späterer Zeit stammen (etwa 2. vorchristliches Jahrh.) und Vergleiche von Instrumenten, die um viele Jahrhunderte auseinanderliegen, nur mit größter Vorsicht durchgeführt werden können, so dürfen diese unter Umständen bestehenden Verbindungen dennoch nicht übersehen werden.”

Duchesne-Guillemin, JNES 28, 109-13; JNES 29, 200-01, sought to identify the arched horizontal harp as the Sumerian instrument *al-gar*. However, such an interpretation appears to be highly unlikely, since arched horizontal harps do not, as a rule, appear in Sumerian art. This disagrees sharply with the fact that the *al-gar* is mentioned frequently in Sumerian sources, which indicates that it was a common, native instrument. Cf. B. Lawergren and O. R. Gurney, *Iraq* 49 (1987) 41-42, who too argue against this identification. For *al-gar*, see, most recently, PSD A/3, 147-48; Th. J. H. Krispijn, *Akkadica* 70 (1990) 9-11; N. C. Veldhuis, *AfO* 44-45 (1997-98) 115, 119-20.

<sup>45</sup> The Oriental Institute Museum A 195A-C. See H. Frankfort, *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient* (Harmondsworth, 1970), 39-40 and fig. 31. Frankfort, *ibid.*, 39, describes it as made of “green steatite,” while L. Cropsey and P. Grant, *The Oriental Institute News & Notes* 181 (Spring 2004), 9, identify its material as “chlorite and limestone or marble” (“blue sandstone” according to the original description by its discoverer E. J. Banks). The vase was originally inlaid with limestone (of which one piece survives), in the manner characteristic of the soft-stone industry of southeastern Iran.



the instruments in question, followed by a drummer and a trumpeter (see figs. 1 and 2).

The other two representations are on cylinders seals, both of which assuredly stem from southeastern Iran.<sup>46</sup> In either case, the central element of the image is a seated snake goddess. While on the Foroughi seal our instrument is depicted in seeming isolation from the rest of the scene (see figs. 4 and 5),<sup>47</sup> on the New York seal it is being played by a kneeling musician as part of the performance taking place before the snake goddess (see figs. 6 and 7).<sup>48</sup>

In addition, a similar arched horizontal harp is represented on a third millennium terracotta plaque (see fig. 8), which was excavated at the site of Shahr-i Sokhta in the Iranian Seistan.<sup>49</sup> In this connection, it is

highly significant that, in later antiquity and modern times, arched horizontal lyres are amply documented in Iran, Bactria, Sogdiana, and India,<sup>50</sup> suggesting that this particular instrument was indigenous to that general region.<sup>51</sup>

While highly suggestive, the hypothesis that we find here representations of the *paraḥšītu* instrument remains hopelessly beyond the possibility of proof. However, it is interesting to note that an Old Babylonian plaque from Ešnunna (which is known to have had exceedingly close contacts with Elam in Old Babylonian times) shows a related type of an arched horizontal harp (see figs. 11 and 12),<sup>52</sup> which could easily be a descendent of

<sup>46</sup> Both seals, here identified as “Foroughi” and “New York” respectively, were acquired on the antiquities market. The former, onetime in the collection of Mossène Foroughi in Teheran, was published and extensively discussed by E. Porada in *Compte Rendu de l’Onzième Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale* (Leiden, 1964), 88-93, pl. 1 fig. A (following p. 64). For a drawing of this seal, see also P. Amiet, *L’âge des échanges inter-iraniens 3500-1700 avant J.-C.* (Paris, 1986), 299 fig. 10. The other seal, now in a private collection in New York, was published by Amiet, *op. cit.*, 168, 299 fig. 12 (drawing), 300 fig. 137 (photograph).

<sup>47</sup> The instrument is placed above and to the left of the seated snake goddess, who is attended by a kneeling woman with two triangular objects. Above the instrument and to the left of it, there is a snake and an airborne eagle, with a human head showing over its left wing (a possible example of the “Etana scene”). See in detail Porada, *op. cit.*, 91-93.

<sup>48</sup> The seal depicts what appears to be a musical performance. The snake goddess sits on a chair planted on an elaborate dais. She faces a group of attendants in two registers. The upper register shows three standing and four sitting women, the former of whom may be singing (their hands seem be clasped under their breasts). In the lower register, one finds two kneeling musicians — a drummer and a harpist — behind whom there is a sitting figure holding a flower or a branch.

<sup>49</sup> M. Tosi, “Excavations at Shahr-i Sokhta, a Chalcolithic Settlement in the Iranian Sīstān, Preliminary Report on the First Campaign, October-December 1967,” *East and West* 18 (1968) fig. 81; Duchesne-Guillemin, “Note complémentaire sur l’instrument algar,” *JNES* 29 (1970) 200-01. As argued by Duchesne-Guillemin, *JNES* 28, 112 and fig. 10, yet another third millennium representation of the same

instrument very likely appears on a Pre-Sargonic plaque from Susa.

<sup>50</sup> See Duchesne-Guillemin, *JNES* 28, 113-15. Cf. also Stauder’s comments cited above n. 44.

<sup>51</sup> Only after this paper had reached the galley stage I realized that the same harp is also depicted on two other artifacts. The first of them is a cylinder seal published and discussed by E. Porada in *Early Mesopotamia and Iran: Contacts and Conflict 3500-1600 BC, Proceedings of a Seminar in Memory of Vladimir G. Lukonin*, ed. by J. Curtis (London, 1993), 49-50, 94 fig. 31. The seal in question (see below fig. 9), in the private collection of Jonathan P. Rosen, and said to have been purchased in Afghanistan, is iconographically related to the New York seal I discussed earlier. Apart from showing in the center a standing female figure with bullhorns (who could be identical with the snake goddess of the New York seal), it too includes, in the bottom register, a group of kneeling female musicians. As described by Porada, “The women’s function is not clearly indicated, but an object above the two figures on the right might be an awkwardly carved lyre. In view of the harpist represented in the lower register of a cylinder of this type published by Amiet [= the New York seal], it is possible that the figures in the lower register represent an orchestra or a group of singers.” The other depiction is found on a silver goblet, allegedly from Bactria, which, based on its style and iconographic and stylistic parallels (such as the Hasanlu Bowl), dates to the second millennium BC. See H.-P. Francfort, “Observations sur la toreutique de la civilisation de l’Oxus,” in *Afghanistan: ancien carrefour entre l’est et l’ouest: actes du colloque international au Musée archéologique Henri-Prades-Lattes du 5 au 7 mai 2003*, ed. by O. Bopearachchi and M.-F. Boussac (Turnhout, 2005), 45 fig. 6 a-d, and below fig. 10. The instrument depicted there bears resemblance to the harp shown on a plaque from Ešnunna (see below).

<sup>52</sup> M. Th. Barrelet, *Figurines et reliefs en terre cuite de la Mésopotamie antique* (Paris, 1968),

the earlier discussed examples.<sup>53</sup> Possibly — but just possibly — this is the instrument Mari sources are talking about.

#### 4. Historical Contacts between Marhaši, Makkan, and Babylonia

I conclude with a brief update of the history of contacts between Marhaši, Makkan, and Babylonia. Most of what I said on that subject in my 1982 article remains valid.<sup>54</sup> Thus, the earliest documented contacts between Marhaši and Babylonia occurred under Sargon of Akkade, the founder of the Sargonic dynasty. It appears that Sargon sent a major military expedition against Elam and Marhaši, since, in one of his inscriptions, he is given the epithet “slayer of Elam and Marhaši.” Significantly, that source names several Marhašean officials,<sup>55</sup> the earliest such information on record.

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pl. LXXV no. 776 (AO 12454). For a detailed technical description of this instrument, see W. Stauder, *Die Harfen und Leiern Vorderasiens in babylonischer und assyrischer Zeit* (Frankfurt a. M., 1961), 46-48. Cf. also Dumbrill, *Musicology and Organology*, 225 and pl. 25.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Stauder, *Die Harfen ... der assyrischer Zeit*, 48, who too suggests a connection with the instrument from the Adab vase: “Eher könnte man noch an eine Verbindung zur Bismaya-Harfe denken ..., die ebenfalls einen unter den linken Arm geklemmten Resonanzkasten, gebogenen Saitenhals bei horizontaler Haltung besitzt und mit Plektrum gespielt wird.” The same conclusion was reached also by Duchesne-Guillemin, *JNES* 28, 112; *Iranica Antiqua* 31, 228.

<sup>54</sup> *ZA* 72, 255-63.

<sup>55</sup> These and other personal names associated with Marhaši have recently been discussed by J.-J. Glassner, “L’onomastique de Marhaši,” *NABU* 2005/1. Glassner concludes that “qu’au sein des élites sociales de Marhaši, certains membres portent des noms se rattachant à une langue inconnue alors que d’autres portent des noms aisément interprétables en une langue sémitique ou en élamite.” Such a firm conclusion, however, seems — to this author at least — a bit premature, if one considers the fact that the knowledge of third millennium Elamite is virtually nil. Is not it possible, at least theoretically, that Elamite had dialects, and, if so, that the names in question reflect a particular local variety of Elamite? Glassner also categorically asserts that the culture of Marhaši “est nettement distincte de celle de Élam.” But

Babylonia’s contacts with Marhaši and the Gulf region intensified under Sargon’s two sons and successors, Rimuš and Maništušu, both of whom campaigned extensively in southeastern Iran. The most important event here was the campaign of Rimuš against Marhaši, of which a fairly detailed description survives. As for Maništušu, he launched an amphibious operation against Makkan from Šerihum, which appears to have represented the coastal region to the southeast of Anšan (Tel Malyan). In 1982, I argued that “the fact that Maništušu could undertake such a daring operation from the territories which lay, if I am correct, in the immediate proximity of Marhaši, may be taken as an indication that the defeat of Marhaši at the hands of Rimuš had indeed eliminated her from the power struggle for hegemony in Iran.”<sup>56</sup> However, this scenario appears to be no longer operative, since, according to the recently published Ur III manuscript of the Sumerian King List,<sup>57</sup> Maništušu in fact *preceded* Rimuš at the throne of Akkade. If this is correct, Maništušu’s Makkan expedition, as having occurred earlier, was unrelated to Rimuš’s operations against Marhaši. This, and the fact that Maništušu’s inscriptions do not mention Marhaši, should probably be interpreted that his Makkan expedition bypassed the territories of Marhaši completely, by following a coastal route all the way from Babylonia (or from some intermediate point

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what is really Elamite culture during the third millennium BC? Is it the Sumer-influenced culture of Susa, or rather the cultural complex of the central and eastern portions of the Iranian plateau, which embraced Anšan, Šimaški, and Marhaši? Indeed, it was very likely this area that produced the so-called linear Elamite script, which is documented at Shahdad, and now also at Jiroft (information courtesy of Y. Madjidzadeh). In short, instead of viewing this issue from a narrow, parochial Susian perspective, we should rather develop a strategy that would allow us to think of the third millennium Iran globally and on its own terms.

<sup>56</sup> *ZA* 72, 258.

<sup>57</sup> Steinkeller, “An Ur III Manuscript of the Sumerian King List,” in *Literatur, Politik und Recht in Mesopotamien: Festschrift für Claus Wilcke*, ed. by W. Sallaberger et al. (Wiesbaden, 2003), 267-92 (esp. 278-79).

on the coast of Elam), and thus avoiding any direct confrontation with Marhaši.

Following this line of reasoning, it very likely was Maništušu's conquest of Makkan that led to the conflict with Marhaši under his successor Rimuš, especially if, as there is all reason to suspect, Makkan was Marhaši's ally or possibly even her political client. In support of this interpretation speaks the fact that the latter conflict appears to have been instigated by Marhaši, and that the military allies of Marhaši in that war included Meluhha (Indus valley), which would naturally be interested in protecting Makkan and its ports from Babylonian domination.

As it happens, Maništušu's expedition to Makkan may not have been the first operation of this kind carried out by a Sargonic king. As is suggested by an inscription of Naram-Sin, recently re-edited by Claus Wilcke,<sup>58</sup> the first Babylonian ruler to campaign there was Sargon, who, according to that source, "crossed (the sea) and smote there Makkan, which is in the middle of the sea, (and then) washed his weapons in the Lower Sea."<sup>59</sup>

Following the demise of the Sargonic empire, and the apparent breakdown of international exchanges within the Gulf region, the next phase of intensive contacts between Babylonia, southeastern Iran, and Makkan took place during the Ur III period.<sup>60</sup> As the Ur III state began to expand territorially, king Šulgi, in the eighteenth year of his reign, gave his daughter in marriage to an unnamed ruler of Marhaši. Since a similar diplomatic marriage involving a ruler of Anšan followed twelve years later, this was clearly a political maneuver, whose objective was to protect Babylonia's eastern flank, as she strove to secure her grip over the western portions of the Iranian plateau. The alliance so established endured — to all appearances very successfully — throughout the Ur III period, as demonstrated by the continuous

presence of Marhašean ambassadors at the court of Ur,<sup>61</sup> the regular movements of officials between Babylonia and Marhaši, the deployment of Marhašean military contingents in Babylonia, and the deliveries of diplomatic gifts from Marhaši (with the latest such delivery being documented under Ibbi-Suen<sup>62</sup>).

The fall of Ur at the hands of the ruler of Anšan and Šimaški named Kindattu appears to have ended direct contacts between Babylonia and Marhaši forever. Although Marhaši's name resurfaces occasionally in the sources of the following (Old Babylonian) period, and its memory survives until the very end of cuneiform civilization, it no longer remained part of Babylonia's political and economic landscape.

<sup>58</sup> "Amar-girids Revolte gegen Narām-Su'en," ZA 87 (1997) 11-32.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 J x 19-28.

<sup>60</sup> ZA 72, 260-63.

<sup>61</sup> As shown recently by P. Michalowski, ZA 95 (2005) 73-74, these envoys are attested from the forty-sixth year of Šulgi through the first year of Ibbi-Suen. Michalowski concludes: "The ample surviving documentation attests to the fact that these ambassadors lived continuously in Sumer for a few years at a time and received animals from the tax collecting station at Puzriš-Dagan on an almost daily basis. This suggests that they were probably surrounded by quite an entourage of Marhašians. On at least one occasion there was a celebration for one such group of people" (*ibid.*, 74).

<sup>62</sup> That gift consisted of a "Meluhhan leopard" (ur gùn-a Me-luh-ha<sup>ki</sup>). See ZA 72, 253, and a recent extensive discussion by D. T. Potts, "Total Prestation in Marhashi-Ur Relations," *Iranica Antiqua* 37 (2002) 343-57.



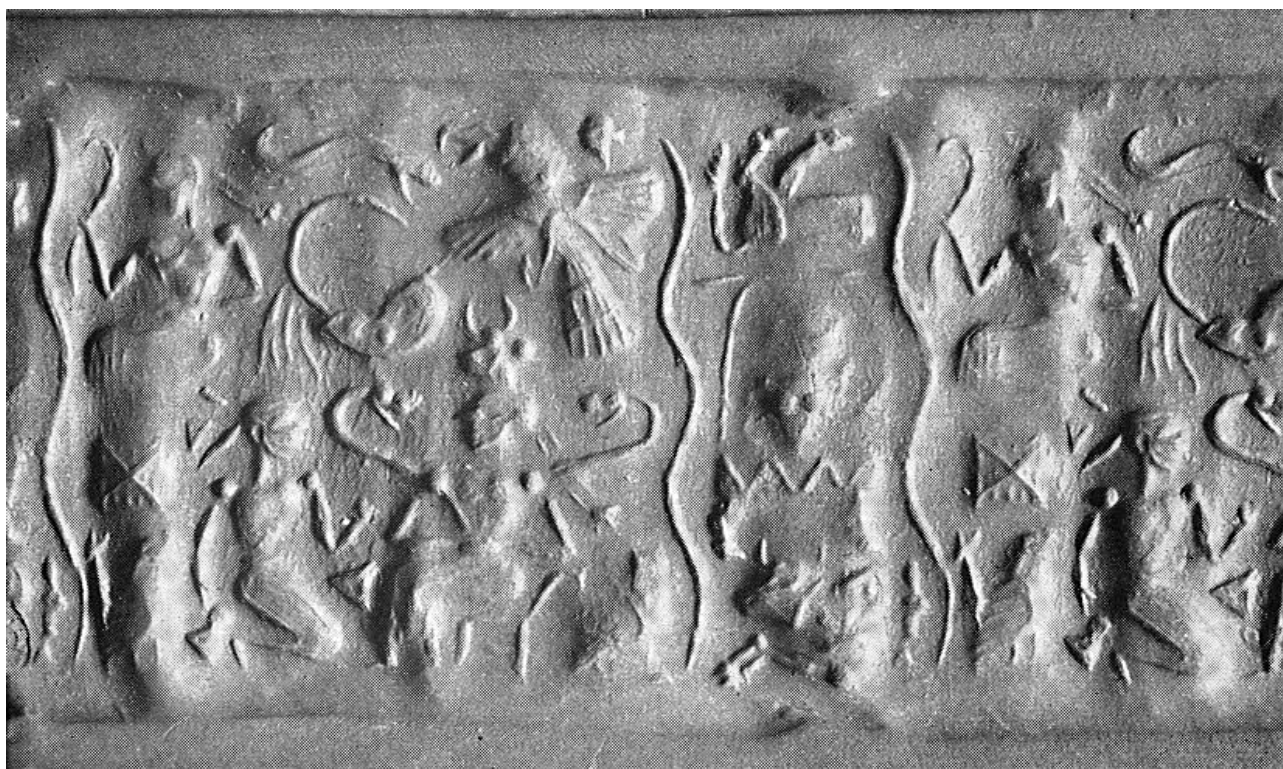
**Fig. 1** *The Adab (Bismaya) vase (after Frankfort, Art and Architecture, 40 fig. 31).*



**Fig. 2** *The harp players on the Adab vase (after Stauder, Die Harfen ... der Sumerer, 16 fig. 16).*



**Fig. 3** *Indian harps of the second century BC (after Stauder, Die Harfen ... der Sumerer, 16 fig. 17).*



**Fig. 4** *The Foroughi seal (after Porada, Compte Rendue de l'Onzième Rencontre, pl. 1 fig. A).*



**Fig. 5** *The Foroughi seal (after Amiet, *L'âge des échanges*, 299 fig. 10).*



**Fig. 6** *The New York seal (after Amiet, *L'âge des échanges*, 300 fig. 137).*



**Fig. 7** *The New York seal (after Amiet, *L'âge des échanges*, 299 fig. 12).*

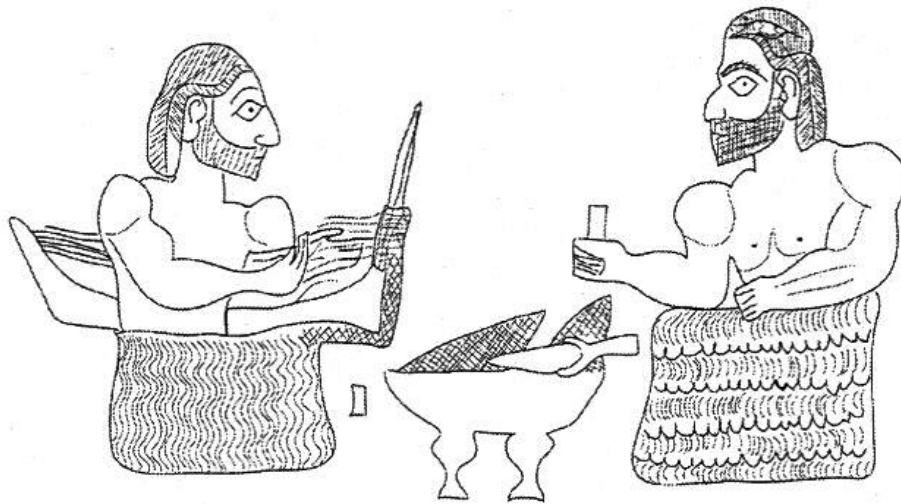


**Fig. 8** The harp player on the Shahr-i Sokhta plaque (after Duchesne-Guillemin, *JNES* 29, 200 fig. 1).



**Fig. 9** The Jonathan P. Rosen seal (after Porada, *Early Mesopotamia and Iran*, 94 fig. 31).



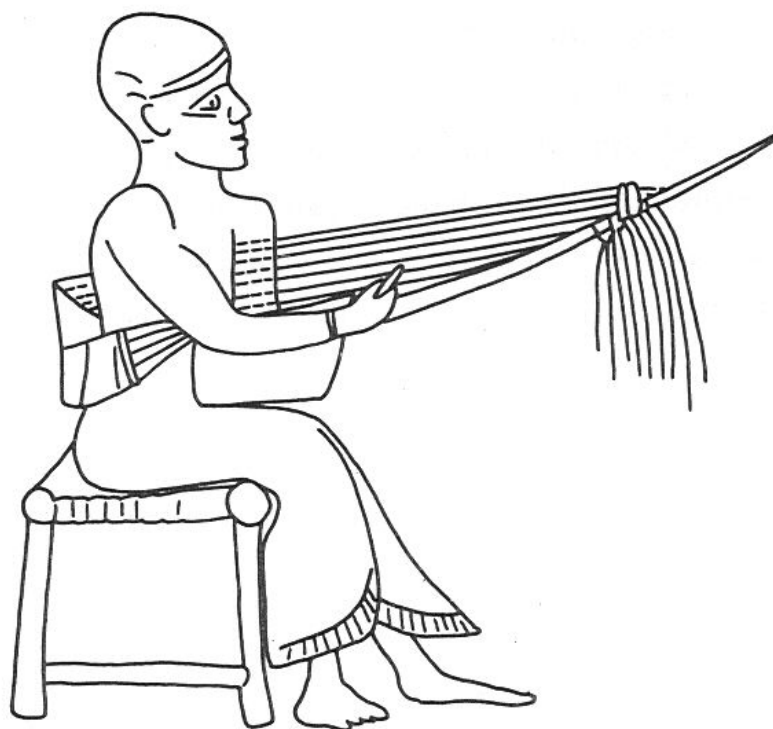


**Fig. 10** "Bactrian" goblet (after Francfort, "Observations," 45 fig. 6a).



**Fig. 11** The Ešnuna plaque (after Barrelet, *Figurines et reliefs*, pl. LXXV no. 776).





**Fig. 12** *The harp player on the Ešnuna plaque (after Stauder, *Die Harfen ... assyrischer Zeit*, 47 fig. 32).*